

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request consideration of this preliminary amendment, which conforms the specification to the formal drawings that were submitted on October 25, 2001.

AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees, which may be required for this amendment, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1963-5005. A DUPLICATE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS ATTACHED.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: October 29, 2001

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APPENDIX A1 – SPECIFICATION

Page 9, Paragraph beginning on Line 1 (Amended) [Fig. 8 is a flowchart] Figs. 8A and 8B are flowcharts illustrating a purchase data interception process executed by the system shown in Fig. 1; and

Page 9, Paragraph beginning on Line 4 (Amended) [Fig. 9 is a flowchart] Figs. 9A and 9B are flowcharts illustrating a bonus exchange process executed by the system shown in Fig. 1.

Page 13, Paragraph beginning on Line 18 (Amended) Many of the fields illustrated in Fig. 2 are self explanatory. The consumer ID field is a number assigned to each consumer 134 by the aggregation service to order the consumers in the database. The user name field corresponds to a name the consumer chooses which the consumer can use to log in to the service (the consumer ID can also be used to log in to the service in place of the user name). The bonuses owned field is a list of the specific bonuses the consumer can either use as the consumer makes purchases online or trade in through a process explained in [Fig. 9] Figs. 9A and 9B. The site points owned field refers to the number of bonus points a particular consumer has acquired by trading in bonuses and coupons the consumer has received while making online purchases through the aggregation service. The procedure for trading in coupons and bonuses is also explained in [Fig. 9] Figs. 9A and 9B.

Page 15, Paragraph beginning on Line 16 (Amended) In one embodiment, once a registered user collects a bonus and the aggregation service assigns a point value to it, the registered user can either keep the bonus or trade it in using the procedure explained in [Fig. 9] Figs. 9A and 9B. If a bonus is kept by the user, the owner field will contain that registered user's consumer ID, which is stored in the consumer database 352 until it is used. When the registered user uses the bonus, the word "used" is entered in the owner field and the entry remains in the database so that the aggregation service can view a user's history. If the registered user decides to trade in the bonus, the owner field for that particular bonus will be blank, and other registered users will be able to trade in points to acquire the bonus through the procedure explained in [Fig. 9] Figs. 9A and 9B.

Page 22, Paragraph beginning on Line 21 (Amended) Once the consumer use process begins, the aggregation service initiates the interception software which will replace the registered user's individual identity with the aggregation service identity as the user browses World Wide Web sites (step 725). When the consumer visits a merchant site (step 730) and makes purchases (step 735), the interception software begins the process shown in [Fig. 8] Figs. 8A and 8B, explained below. After the consumer leaves the merchant site, the interception software forces the user to return to the aggregation service's home page (step 740). At that point the user can either select the shop option in step 745 to continue shopping or exit the aggregation service which will terminate the interception software (step 750).

Page 23, Paragraph beginning on Line 11 (Amended) As mentioned before, [Fig. 8 illustrates] Figs. 8A and 8B illustrate the steps the interception software takes when a registered user browses merchants online. First, in step 805, the registered user will enter logon info for the merchant site. The act of logging on to the merchant site can be accomplished in several different ways including simply entering the world wide web address or URL of the merchant to clicking on a link provided by the aggregation service.

Page 26, Paragraph beginning on Line 12 (Amended) In one embodiment, the user is initially indicated as the owner in the owner field of the bonus database 356. In this case, the user can then either use the bonus or trade it in for points (explained in [Fig. 9] Figs. 9A and 9B). In an another embodiment, the user receives points (stored in the site points owned field in the consumer database illustrated in Fig. 2) for the purchase which can be traded in for coupons on the aggregation site (again, as explained in [Fig. 9] Figs. 9A and 9B). In yet another embodiment, the user can receive points for a purchase based on the purchasing history of the user, regardless of whether the user received a coupon or bonus for the particular transaction. Under this embodiment, users are rewarded based on their usage of the aggregation service and extensive purchasing history.

Page 27, Paragraph beginning on Line 3 (Amended) [Fig. 9 illustrates] Figs. 9A and 9B illustrate the steps a registered user takes in trading in coupons for site points and vice versa. In step 900, the user goes to the aggregation service's home page (after logging in) and chooses to

view or trade in coupons for site points and vice versa. In step 900, the user goes to the aggregation service's home page (after logging in) and chooses to view or trade in bonuses/points. The aggregation service then displays information on all of the bonuses belonging to the consumer and the number of site points owned (step 905). The user can then select to trade in bonuses for points (step 910) or trade in points for bonuses (step 930). Users can choose to return to the aggregation service's home page at any time if they don't want to make a trade (steps 935 and 940).